



Candidate Information Pack

Pensions Administrator

Introduction to the role

Due to some regulatory changes, SPPA have an exciting opportunity to be part of their newly formed Project Team. To ensure that business as usual operations can continue without interruption, 40 positions have been created to support this important work.

As a Pensions Administrator, you will be making a real difference to over half a million essential workers in Scotland!

All roles in this recruitment are graded the same and we expect all candidates to have good customer service skills with a high level of attention to detail.



40

positions
available

Overview of the regulatory changes

2015 Remedy

On 1 April 2015 public sector pension schemes were reformed and the Career Average Revalued Earnings (CARE) pension scheme was introduced.

Most pension scheme members were moved from their legacy scheme (final salary) to the reformed (CARE) scheme, but some protections were put in place for members who were close to their retirement date. These protections meant that older members stayed in their pre-reform schemes.

The Court of Appeal found that this discriminated against younger scheme members. The government is removing this

discrimination for the period between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022. This is known as the remedy period.

From 1 April 2022 all NHS, Teachers, Police and Fire pension scheme members became members of the 2015 pension scheme and the pre-reform schemes were closed to any further pension build-up. This means that members affected by the 2015 remedy and who choose to retire after 1 April 2022, will be entitled to both legacy and reformed scheme benefits.

This is a significant regulatory change and the SPPA has established a project team to work alongside pension scheme colleagues to action the necessary changes required to deliver the remedy.



As a

**Pensions
Administrator**

you will make a real
difference to over
half a million
essential workers in
Scotland.



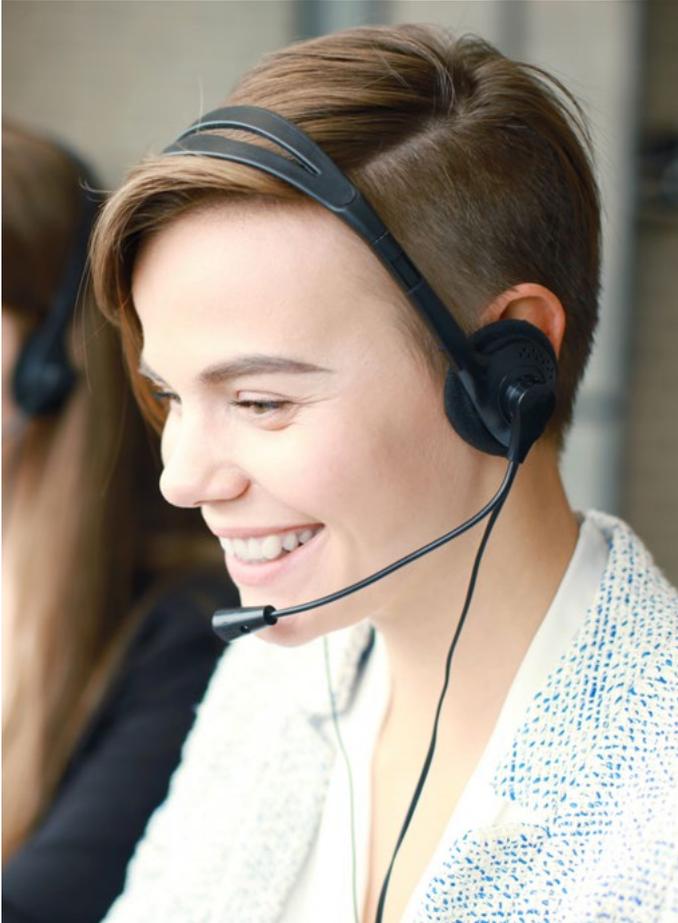
Benefits of joining the Civil Service in Scotland



Working in the civil service in Scotland offers you **much more than just a salary.**

Some additional benefits include:

- Full induction programme and on-going personal learning plan
- Flexible working offering excellent work/ life balance
- Civil service pension
- Learning and development opportunities to support your personal development and help you meet your continued professional development requirements or progress with professional qualifications in support of your role
- Friendly, supportive organisation which encourages innovative ideas to support continuous improvement
- Career progression opportunities – you will be joining an ever evolving organisation with growth and change being supported by high calibre professionals and promotional opportunities available for all
- Health and wellbeing support including 24 hour access to our employee assistance programme, plus mental health and counselling support available



What does SPPA do?

The Scottish Public Pensions Agency (SPPA) administers pensions for Scottish Teachers, Police, Firefighters' and National Health Service employees on behalf of the Scottish Government. We're responsible for protecting the financial futures of over half a million of Scotland's key workers.

Based in the outskirts of [Tweedbank](#) in the Scottish Borders - a stone's throw from the Borders Railway terminus, we have an ambitious strategy in place to set our Agency up for sustainable success.

As an agency of the Scottish Government, we offer flexible working patterns, as well as an impressive range of benefits and professional development opportunities.

Main duties of the role

- Provide customers with correct and accurate information by applying a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of complex scheme regulations and administering all parts of the pension lifecycle.
- Demonstrate comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the specific pension schemes, applying this expertise to administer casework of varying complexities, interrogating member records, making the appropriate decisions to process all parts of the pension lifecycle including calculating benefits and payments.
- Prioritise all customer and third party requests, ensuring problems are resolved promptly and efficiently in compliance with the correct scheme regulations, agreed procedures and timescales.
- Collate, analyse, validate and process customer information accurately and securely, maintaining member and scheme records in compliance with all data regulations.
- Receive, evaluate, analyse and prioritise customer requests, assessing information across multiple schemes, indexing all incoming mail (including information received through digital sources) into the correct workflow and directing inquiries to appropriate area.
- Make and communicate accurate decisions by either providing the customer with a correct and accurate response or referring the enquiry to the appropriate area within the Agency.
- Actively identify and participate in opportunities for continuous improvement to customer service, contributing to the development of more effective ways of working throughout SPPA.



answer screening questions



upload CV and personal details



How to apply

If this is the first time you have applied to the Scottish Government, or you haven't applied for a while then you will need to register and set up a profile.

You will be asked to complete:

1. Screening questions - covering information required for the recruitment process and to enable us to monitor our performance as an inclusive employer. These include:

- **Diversity Monitoring.** See the Civil Service Diversity and Inclusion Strategy for more information.
- **Disability Confident Scheme** (previously known as Guaranteed Interview Scheme) for disabled persons. For further information, see here. If you require reasonable adjustments to support you to apply for this role, please email SPPARecruitment@gov.scot in confidence. For example, a reasonable adjustment at application stage could be providing information in an accessible format.
- **Nationality section.** Please see the Civil Service Nationality Rules for further information.

Your responses are solely for HR use and responses will not be passed to the selection panel.

2. Upload Your CV and personal details – To create/update your profile you will be asked to upload your CV.

There are no formal qualification requirements for this role.

You will be required to complete an online assessment which will be emailed to you after the closing date. The online assessment will consist of a multiple choice exercise.

The competencies that will be considered during the assessment process are:

1. **Self-awareness**
2. **Team work**
3. **Customer Service**
4. **Information management**
5. **Communications and engagement**

If you achieve the minimum score required on the assessment, you will be invited to an interview.

The interview process

During the interview we will ask you for examples of situations you have been in before, what you did and what the outcome was. This will allow us to get a better understanding of what capabilities and skills you have.

To demonstrate this, you don't need to give examples from the workplace. It could be from a situation that happened in your home life, as part of a sports club or team that you are involved in or from a school or further education setting.

Do not be daunted by this as your answers will be based on something you know about best – you. You will have a range of things you have encountered in your life that you can draw upon.



It will be helpful to consider the **STARR** approach:

- **Situation** – give a brief outline of the context
- **Task** – What did you want to achieve? What were your aims / objectives?
- **Action** – What did you personally do?
- **Result** – What was the result?
- **Reflection** - Do you have reflections

Recruitment Timeline

See recruitment stages and estimated dates of completion below:



Covid-19 measures

In recognition of the Scottish Government's ongoing measures and guidance in its response to Covid-19 (Coronavirus), we would like to advise applicants that a decision has been taken that all interviews must be conducted in a virtual/remote setting.

In order to facilitate this new way of working, we are asking all applicants to ensure that they have a suitable space to complete the virtual interview as well as a personal device of choice with an account registered to the 'MS Teams' app by which you can undertake the interview/assessment if selected. We are also asking you to ensure that your personal

Wi-Fi/Broadband capacity will be sufficient to carry both audio and video feeds to undertake the interview. This will then ensure that there are no issues incurred during the interview.

The Resourcing Team will contact you to confirm if you have been successful in the process, and if so, invite you to a competency based interview. More details will be provided on this nearer the time but please make yourself familiar with the Scottish Government competency framework for this grade: [Competencies for Band A Roles](#)

Committed to Diversity

We are committed to increasing the diversity of our workforce.



We:

- Positively value the different perspectives and skills of all colleagues, and make full use of these in our work
- Manage and develop everyone, ignoring all irrelevant differences

Our passion for diversity and equality means creating a work environment for all employees that is welcoming, respectful, engaging, and enriched with opportunities for personal and professional development.



Our mission, vision and values

Our Mission

We work together to improve the lives of the people of Scotland.



Our Vision

We put the people we serve at the heart of everything we do. We use digital thinking and approaches to strengthen our work and provide a better service for everyone. We are driven by our values, always searching for new ways to learn and improve. All in the service of Scotland.

In the service of Scotland

Our Values



Our values have been created by Scottish Government colleagues, for Scottish Government colleagues. They represent who we are, who we aspire to be, and what we believe in. They build on the foundations of our Civil Service Code and National Performance Framework values. They

guide how we act, the decisions we take and how we work together, across all parts of government, to improve the lives of the people of Scotland. Irrespective of role or location. It directs change and development for individuals, teams, directorates and the organisation.

Further Information

Nationality Requirements

This job is broadly open to the following groups:

- UK nationals
- nationals of Commonwealth countries who have the right to work in the UK
- nationals of the Republic of Ireland
- nationals from the EU, EEA or Switzerland with (or eligible for) status under the European Union Settlement Scheme (EUSS)
- relevant EU, EEA, Swiss or Turkish nationals working in the Civil Service
- relevant EU, EEA, Swiss or Turkish nationals who have built up the right to work in the Civil Service
- certain family members of the relevant EU, EEA, Swiss or Turkish nationals

If you have any queries relating to your eligibility on the grounds of Nationality or Qualifications, or if you have any difficulty applying for this role, please contact SPPARecruitment@gov.scot

Working Pattern

This is a full time vacancy, however applications from people wishing to work an alternative working pattern will be considered.

Security Checks

Good security is a priority for the Scottish Government and all employees play a key role in keeping the organisation safe, secure and resilient. A Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS) check will be carried out as part of the pre-employment checks for this role, as is standard with all Scottish Government posts. Additional security checks may also be required if a higher level of clearance is required for this post.

Guaranteed Interview Scheme

Applicants claiming a guaranteed interview will be invited for further assessment should they meet the minimum essential criteria listed in this document.

Interview Expenses

Travel and subsistence expenses incurred during the selection process are the responsibility of the applicant.



Political Activity

All appointees to the Civil Service must be able to fully comply with the requirements of the [Civil Service Code](#) and are expected to carry out their role with dedication and a commitment to the Civil Service and its core values: which are Honesty, Integrity, Objectivity and Impartiality. As part of this, some restrictions are placed on political activity. You will see that there is a question regarding such activity on the application form. A positive response to this question should not affect the consideration of your application, but is likely to mean that you will be asked additional questions at interview. What you then say at interview will clarify if you meet the requirements of the Civil Service Code.

The Civil Service Code states that:

You must:

- Serve the government, whatever its political persuasion, to the best of your ability in a way which maintains political impartiality and is in line with the requirements of this code, no matter what your own political beliefs are.
- Act in a way which deserves and retains the confidence of ministers, while at the same time ensuring that you will be able to establish the same relationship with those whom you may be required to serve in some future government
- Comply with any restrictions that have been laid down on your political activities

You must not:

- Act in a way that is determined by party political considerations, or use official resources for party political purposes
- Allow your personal political views to determine any advice you give or your actions.

Pre-employment Security and Eligibility Checks

If you are successful, and are not currently a serving member of the Civil Service, we will as part of the Scottish Governments pre-employment process carry out the following enquiries into your identity, employment/ academic history, nationality and immigration status, 'unspent' criminal record (Disclosure certificate), health and other matters, to ensure that you are qualified for the appointment.

Completion of Pre-employment Security and Eligibility Checks

When the pre-employment enquiries are satisfactorily completed to our standard, we will then make you a formal offer of appointment and you will be expected to take up appointment as soon as possible. If you have any question about our pre-employment checks please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Selection

This role has a two stage selection process:

1. Candidates are required to answer screening questions and upload their CV with the required personal details. Those who meet the screening requirements will be invited to complete an online assessment.
2. Successful candidates will then be invited to a competency based interview.

You will be given further details about the competency based interview and other assessment elements with your letter of invitation.

The data we collect throughout the selection process will be held and used in accordance with the terms of the Data Protection Act.

Diversity Monitoring Form

Information given on the diversity monitoring form will be treated in strictest confidence and will be retained by HR for monitoring purposes. It will be kept separately from your application form and will not be made available to those involved in the selection decision.

Disability

We are participants in the Jobcentre Plus “Positive about Disabled People” scheme. Under the terms of the scheme, all candidates who consider themselves to be disabled in terms of the Equality Act 2010, and who meet the essential minimum criteria for the post, will be guaranteed an interview.

Act 2010 states that a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. A ‘substantial disadvantage’ is a disadvantage which is more than minor or trivial. ‘Long-term’ means that the effect of the impairment has lasted or is likely to last for at least twelve months (there are special rules covering recurring conditions). Further guidance in relation to the meaning of disability is accessible on the Equality and Human Rights Commission website.

We will also ensure that we consider and implement any reasonable adjustments you may require to attend for interview or during the course of your employment, should you be successful in securing a post.

Note: The Equality Act 2010 states that a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. A ‘substantial disadvantage’ is

a disadvantage which is more than minor or trivial. ‘Long-term’ means that the effect of the impairment has lasted or is likely to last for at least twelve months (there are special rules covering recurring conditions). Further guidance in relation to the meaning of disability is accessible on the Equality and Human Rights Commission [website](#).

We will also ensure that we consider and implement any reasonable adjustments you may require to attend for interview or during the course of your employment, should you be successful in securing a post.

Starting Salary

We expect that all new entrants will join us on the minimum of the advertised pay range.

Working Pattern

The standard working week is a 5 day week of 37 hours, net of lunch breaks. You may have the scope to participate in the Scottish Government’s flexible working scheme. Consideration will be given to candidates interested in part-time or other non-standard working patterns and in-line with best practice, the Scottish Government has extended to all staff the right to request a flexible working pattern. All requests will be seriously considered.

Annual Leave

You will have an annual leave allowance of 5 weeks, rising to 6 weeks after 4 years. In addition, the Scottish Government observes 11 days public and privilege holidays, dates of which are set annually.

Annual leave is calculated on a pro-rata basis for any employees working part-time.

Probation

You will be required to serve a probationary period of 9 months and confirmation of your appointment is dependent on the satisfactory completion of this probation period in terms of performance, conduct and attendance.

Travel and Subsistence

Subsistence allowances and travelling expenses on official duty are paid. The cost of normal daily travel between home and office is not reimbursable.

Sick Absence

You are expected to attend for work. However, we do recognise that 100% attendance may not be possible on occasions when you are unwell. We have an attendance management policy in place that makes it clear the level of attendance that the Scottish Government expects and what may happen if this cannot be achieved. The policy outlines the support offered to staff during periods of illness and the assistance available to help them back to work.



Retirement

The Scottish Government has a “no retirement age” policy for staff in Bands A-C. This means that you are free to continue in employment for as long as you wish. Continued employment will remain subject to the normal rules concerning performance, conduct and attendance.

Outside Activities

As a civil servant, you may not take part in any activity which would in any way impair your usefulness to the Service, or engage in any occupation which may conflict with the interests of the Scottish Government or be inconsistent with your official position. Subject to these conditions, and in some circumstances prior permission being sought, work of a minor or short-term nature (for example, vacation work or work after hours) is normally allowed. Also for health and safety purposes you should notify HR if you have more than one job. You will also be subject to certain restrictions, depending on your grade and the nature of your work, on national and local political activities. These include standing as a candidate in parliamentary or local authority elections, or canvassing on behalf of candidates; and expressing views on matters of political controversy in public speeches or publications.

The Civil Service Commission

The Department’s recruitment processes are underpinned by the principle of selection for appointment on merit on the basis of fair and open competition. Details of how this principle should be applied can be found at the Civil Service Commission website.

Civil Service Values

As a civil servant, you are appointed on merit on the basis of fair and open competition and are expected to carry out your role with dedication and a commitment to the Civil Service and its core values: Integrity, Honesty, Objectivity and Impartiality.

These values are set out in the Civil Service Code:

- 'Integrity' Putting the obligations of public service above your own personal interests;
- 'Honesty' Being truthful and open;
- 'Objectivity' Basing your advice and decisions on rigorous analysis of the evidence; and
- 'Impartiality' Acting solely according to the merits of the case and serving equally well Governments of different political persuasions.



Thank you
for taking the time to read
this Candidate Information
Pack.



Pensions Administrator